

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 24 July 2009**

### **Question from Mr A Lee, Herefordshire Area Chairman – The Ramblers Association**

On 22 January 2009, Herefordshire Council announced its intention to go forward with the proposed contract with Amey Wye Valley for the management and delivery of a range of services including highways, parks, public open spaces and public rights of way. Our concern for all things relating to Public Rights of Way (PROW) in Herefordshire prompted several questions from The Herefordshire Ramblers.

We did receive answers and although not entirely happy with the responses, they were reluctantly accepted, as we were told in a letter from the Council on 19 May 2009 that “..... negotiations with Amey are continuing and it is anticipated these will be concluded shortly to enable the new arrangements to be put in place over the summer this year. Whilst the management and the delivery of these services would transfer to Amey, the responsibility remains with the Council and client and contract management arrangements are being put in place to ensure the services continue to be delivered and are improved where possible. ....”

We believe these negotiations are still ongoing, with no conclusion in sight. In the meanwhile many PROW issues are effectively held in abeyance pending a final outcome. PROW staff have left and there are vacancies within the PROW department that are not being filled. PROW personnel, part time and temporary staff are performing a valiant fire-fighting role but this is obviously not the way forward or even a solution to hold station.

- 2.1 *What steps is Herefordshire Council taking to ensure that PROW services continue to be delivered whilst negotiations continue?*
- 2.2 *What steps is Herefordshire Council taking to ensure that PROW services improve whilst negotiations continue?*